The MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour

PBS Network

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An End and a Beginning at the CIA

JIM LEHRER: The going of William Casey and the coming of Robert Gates are first up tonight.

Casey officially resigned today as head of the Central Intelligence Agency following surgery for a brain tumor. Gates was named to succeed him.

Casey is a long-time political friend of President Reagan, who ran the 1980 Reagan campaign. He is 73 years old. Gates is a career CIA man with 20 years service. He is 43 years old.

We look at the old and the new now with three men, Stansfield Turner, who was Director of the CIA in the Carter Administration, George Carver, a former career CIA official who served 26 years in the Agency, and we hope to be joined shortly by Morton Halperin, a critic of CIA covert operations and Director of the Washington Office of the American Civil Liberties Union.

First, gentlemen, on William Casey, how will he be remembered as a head of the CIA, Mr. Turner.

ADMIRAL STANSFIELD TURNER (Former CIA Director): Well, Jim, I can tell you from personal experience that it is very difficult and sometimes unfair to judge a CIA Director from the outside.

I think in this case, the best I could for you is point out a couple of things that Mr. Casey did differently. First of all, he was a more political director than previous ones, taking positions on policy issues which most directors have not seen fit to do.

Secondly, he didn't want the policy of openness the Carter Administration brought in, that is, disclosing to the media and the public as much intelligence as we could without endangering the secrets that had to be kept. Thirdly, he didn't, in order to keep secrets, want to tell much to the Congress, and that's led to some of the problems today.

And finally, he put a great new emphasis on covert actions, taking what I think was a very substantial number of covert actions on the books when he came in and expanding it substantially, the contra affair in Nicaragua as an example.

LEHRER: Do those add up to you, those four points add up to you, to a positive legacy or a negative legacy?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Oh, I think that we are going to have to wait some time to judge whether the contra affair, for instance, has been good or bad for the country. Thus far, it has not accomplished much. It's become a very overt covert action, but whether in the long run it's going to do some good, it's too early to tell.

LEHRER: Mr. Carver, how would you assess Mr. Casey's tenure?

GEORGE CARVER (Former CIA Official): Well, it's awfully close to the scene for definitive assessment, but I think on the whole Bill did extremely well and can be very proud of his legacies.

He did curtail some of the openness, but many within the profession, myself included, and certainly many of our allies and people with whom we had to collaborate overseas, that we had erred too far in the direction of openness, and were very skittish about our ability to protect even our own, let alone their secrets.

He did give a great deal of emphasis to covert action, which some of us felt had been excessively de-emphasized under the Carter Administration.

He did much to rebuild the morale and the effectiveness of the Operations Director, and he built on his predecessors' legacies in continuing to improve the analytic effort and the technical collection effort.

So, he did not get along well with Congress. He was a combative Irishman. He didn't suffer gladly people he thought they knew less than they should, and he sometimes went up with a chip on his shoulder.

Admiral Turner and others of his predecessors got along much better with the Hill. That has to be regarded as an offset, but I think on balance, Bill can take great pride in his six years of tenure as Director of Central Intelligence. And, I think that will be the view that strengthens over the years
ahead.

LEHRER: You are talking, really, from an internal point of view. In other words, the people who work for the CIA liked working for him, is that what you are saying?

CARVER: That is correct. I'm saying the people who worked at the CIA liked working for him, though I had not personally worked for him because I had retired before then, and I think they liked working for him for the right reasons which were actually in the country's national interest.

LEHRER: But you said, Admiral, that you can't -- it's unfair to assess the tenure of a CIA Director from looking only from the inside.

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ADMIRAL TURNER: The outside.

LEHRER: From the outside.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Where you and I sit today, because most of his errors have become public, and most of his accomplishments, hopefully, are still secret.

Any director who has some tremendous successes and secrets, one hopes that they are not known to the public.

But the intelligence committees of the Congress are the ones who are going to have to pass that judgment, and they are going to do that in the next few months with respect to Mr. Casey.

LEHRER: Well, that was really to my point which is, why shouldn't the head of the CIA be held to the same standards of any other public official, which is, be accountable to the public, and let the public decide whether or not he's done his job properly?

ADMIRAL TURNER: We in the public cannot share secrets and keep them secret, so that's why, starting with President Ford and Mr. Bush in 1976, we've established in this country some surrogates for the public in judging the CIA, that is, the two intelligence committees of the Congress. And, it's reporting to them which is a strength for the CIA, rather than a cross, in my opinion.

LEHRER: Is it your position, Mr. Carver, that when Admiral Turner stepped aside and turned the CIA over to Mr. Casey, ~~that~~ it needed -- that it had some morale problems from within that Mr. Casey has taken care of?

CARVER: I think that it did have some morale problems from within. It always has morale problems from within. It had them when Admiral Turner came on board, and I think Mr. Casey has done a great deal to enhance morale within the Agency.

I think he has tightened up on disclosure in areas where it needed to be tightened, but the Admiral is absolutely correct. A Director of Central Intelligence is not like the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Human Services. There are many things that he must protect, cannot discuss publicly, and the oversight committees have to be the surrogate for the public. But, even there, you have to be very careful that they keep their counsel and keep quiet, and do not bring into the public domain many things that have to be kept secret if our intelligence service is going to be effective.

LEHRER: All right. Let's talk about the successor, Mr. Robert Gates. Both of you know him. He worked directly for you, did he not, Admiral?

ADMIRAL TURNER: That's correct. He was, for five years, on the National Security Council staff. When he came back in 1979, I asked him to be my personal assistant, my executive assistant, in my immediate office.

I felt that he was a man of imagination, innovativeness. He supported the changes I'd made in the CIA. He wanted to do others. He had good ideas what to do.

I found him very open-minded.

LEHRER: How did you spot him down from the chain?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, he was in the National Security Council staff, and I was down there working with them all the time, so I knew him well from my contact with him there.

LEHRER: All right. What's your impression of Robert Gates?

CARVER: Well, my impression is very high, and in a sense, I, perhaps, am the one who spotted him from the chain.

LEHRER: Well, let me just tell the audience that Morton Halperin has now joined us. I introduced you a moment ago, Mr. Halperin, with the expectation that you would arrive.

We've been talking about Mr. Casey. Now we are talking about Mr. Gates. I'll get to you in just a moment. I just asked Mr. Carver about Robert Gates.

CARVER: In November of 1973, when I became Deputy for National Intelligence and organized the National Intelligence Officer structure, the NIO for Strategic Forces had, like all the others, only one assistant. I was trying to inhibit Parkinson's Law with some degree of success.

He was also --

LEHRER: Explain to us what Parkinson's Law is.

CARVER: Parkinson's Law is that bureaucracies grow at an inexorable rate no matter what amount of work they have to do. In fact, they grow at the same rate even if they have no work. The British Colonial Office continued to expand in size as the number of colonies, for example, decreased.

LEHRER: Okay.

CARVER: Now, Howard Stirtz came to me and said, look, I am
currently advisor to the SALT delegation. My assistant is constantly at work. I need a second assistant.

We canvassed the Agency for the brightest analyst we could get. We reviewed 75 files, and the man we picked was Robert Gates, and he did brilliantly there. He went from there down to the NSC staff where he continued to do brilliantly.

He caught Admiral Turner's eye, and in a sense, I helped bring him up out of the trenches among the other majors and lieutenant colonels, as it were.

LEHRER: But, what was there in that file out of the 75 that caught your eye?

CARVER: A great capacity for work, a tremendous amount of intelligence, a thorough knowledge of his field, which in that case was matters relating to Soviet strategic capabilities and arms control related questions, and an unflinching, uncompromising integrity. Bob always called them exactly as he saw them. He gave his own review of the evidence, and whether others agreed with him or not was a matter of supreme indifference to him if he felt the facts dictated a certain conclusion, and that I admired.

LEHRER: Mr. Halperin, what's your reading of Robert Gates?

MORTON HALPERIN (ACLU): Well, I don't know him personally, but I think the symbolism of appointing somebody out of the ranks who is an analyst is enormously important.

This is the first time the CIA will be headed by a career official who comes out of the analytic side of the Agency rather than the operational side.

LEHRER: Why is that important?

HALPERIN: Because I think that what the Agency was set up to do by the Congress is to do analysis, to get the best information, and to put it before the President, and not to be out doing the kinds of covert operations that we've unfortunately been reading about in the press.

And, I take this as a symbol of a determination to get the Agency back on track, to get it focused on what it ought to be doing and not into activities which may be illegal of unconstitutional.

LEHRER: Do you see the same symbol?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, I don't think that's the right message on this case, because the Reagan Administration

has been dedicated to building up exactly that portion of the CIA that Mr. Halperin doesn't want to exist, the Covert Action Branch. And, I don't believe the President has changed his attitude on that one whit.

LEHRER: And, Robert Gates, the appointment of Robert Gates, doesn't mean that?

CARVER: Well, I don't think it really does. I mean, both functions are spelled out in Section 102 of the National Security Act of '47, which is the Agency's basic charter.

Gates is an analyst, whereas, both Helms and Colby, their two previous professions were operational. This simply proves that you can become master mason whether you come up through the York right or the Scottish right.

And, I think that it is well --

LEHRER: I'm not going to ask you to explain that.

CARVER: -- received within the Agency that someone from the analytic community can reach the top, but Gates was Bill Casey's hand-picked deputy. He is Bill Casey's, I'm sure, hand-picked successor, because I don't think --

LEHRER: Are you sure of that?

CARVER: Well, I don't know it for a fact in the sense that I talked to him on the phone, but I would be very surprised, given the nature of the relationship between the President and his DCI, if he would name someone of whom the DCI didn't approve. And, I think that because he's naming a successor, that Bill probably recommended it, because there were many others who wanted other people.

And, therefore, I think to expect Bob to flip-flop, as Admiral Turner said, and pursue a totally different line, is to expect something that's not going to happen.

MR. HALPERIN: Well, I don't expect him to flip-flop. I do expect that out of the fact that the Agency has been burned again by getting dragged into covert operations which really go and violate the congressional limits on those operations, that you now have a new person who does come from the analytic ranks, that there is going to be a natural tendency, at least I would hope there would be, to move back towards more skepticism about covert operations and more dependent on the analysts who had been -- if they had been asked, would have said that the operations that were being conducted did not make sense.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Jim, this is not unrelated to the Iran contra scandal that the CIA is going to have to testify on in the next few months.

I think the President may well have perceived that it was better to have someone from the inside who knew all the facts about that, who was party to whatever the CIA's role has been, be the one who goes up and tries to explain this and make the case for the CIA to the Congress.

CARVER: There is something else, too. Bob Gates was confirmed last April by the Congress as Deputy Director of Central Intelligence. He is very highly regarded on the Hill as an individual, both by the members and by the staffers on the oversight committees. He has a degree of personal credibility that I think will greatly ease his confirmation hearings and keep them from being the difficult ones that they might have been if a high powered political figure with no intelligence knowledge had been appointed.

LEHRER: Mr. Halperin, as a general premise, as a critic of the CIA, particularly in its covert operations, do you believe that it is wise for the CIA Director to be a career CIA man or somebody who is brought in from the outside by each President?

HALPERIN: Well, I think they should be a mix of both.

I think it is perfectly appropriate to have a career person.

I think what is a real mistake is to have a person that has a political relationship with the President, as Mr. Casey did, and who sees himself as defending the President's interest rather than defending the integrity of the Agency.

LEHRER: So, if you had been here a moment ago when I started this and asked what you thought the Casey legacy will be, you would say less than positive.

HALPERIN: I think the Casey legacy was a disaster. I think all the good will that had been built up between the Agency and the Congress over the period after the intelligence scandals was dissipated by Mr. Casey.

He had utter disdain for Congress' role. He consistently did not follow the war which required him to report on illegal activities and on covert operations, and I think we're going to have to start rebuilding that again.

LEHRER: How would you see Robert Gates' relationship with Congress, Mr. Carver?

CARVER: I would say it's been cordial ever since he became Deputy Director, and I would see it continuing to be so.

Let me say I disagree with much of what Morty just said. I don't want to pass unchallenged.

I think Gates was a wise choice for this reason, and I think that another reason why he was a wise choice, whatever else happens in American politics, Ronald Reagan will not be occupying the Oval Office in January, '79, and I think that there is a strong chance that this may prove to be an interim appointment of only 18 odd months duration.

And, I think bringing someone from the outside --

LEHRER: January of '79?

CARVER: That's right, after the elections of 19 -- '89, excuse me.

LEHRER: '89, right.

CARVER: I think if someone from the outside had been brought in now, and I think Mort's right that they should be a mix of insiders and outsiders --

LEHRER: Do you think that as a career man, you don't mind outsiders coming in like Admiral Turner?

CARVER: The two most brilliant directors we've ever had, in my lexicon, and I've worked with every one of them --

ADMIRAL TURNER: Besides me.

CARVER: Present company --

ADMIRAL TURNER: Leave me out.

CARVER: -- excepted, has been John McComb and Richard Helms. One was the quintessential outsider, one was the quintessential insider. It doesn't matter where they come from so long as they do the job, but I think that having a mix and alternating is a wise policy.

And, I think that had you brought in someone totally from the outside who had to be confirmed --

LEHRER: Now.

CARVER: Now, and then take six to eight months to bring them up to speed in the job, so that, perhaps, they only have a year to do it, I do not think that would have been in the country, or the President's, or anyone's interest. So, I think that was another reason why picking a professional at this juncture was a very astute move.

LEHRER: The question about Gates, though. He's 43 years old. He's obviously got a lot going for him, but isn't that unusual for a man that young to be given this kind of responsibility in this way?

CARVER: Well, Admiral Turner can mention, I'm sure, people possibly including himself who became three and four start admirals in the Navy, chiefs of naval operations, at similarly tender ages and did brilliantly.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Not that young.

LEHRER: Maybe it's my own age. It just seems younger than --

CARVER: He seems awful young to me, too.

ADMIRAL TURNER: I don't think we should rule him out on age at all. I don't think that's a factor. 20 some years in the organization is ample. You have to look at the whole experience factor and ask yourself, has he had a broad enough experience.

Other than his predecessor, John McMahon, Bob Gates has --

LEHRER: As the Deputy.

ADMIRAL TURNER: I'm sorry, predecessor as the Deputy, John McMahon, Bob Gates has had a wider experience than almost anyone I've met from the CIA.
The CIA has a tendency to cloister people in one area and not let them get out and try their wings somewhere else.

Bob Gates was on that National Security Council staff long enough to have a much broader view of intelligence.

LEHRER: Mr. Halperin, it's been suggested by some that maybe the CIA Director ought to be handled like the FBI Director, a ten-year appointment, the President can't

fire him except for it has to be severe cause, et cetera, et cetera.

Do you think that the CIA should be handled the same way?

HALPERIN: Well, I think if the CIA was doing what I think it should do, which is to confine itself largely to being an analytic Agency which brings conflicting information about the world to the President, that that would make sense.

The problem is that the CIA has been used by a number of presidents, primarily as a tool of a secret foreign policy, which is what Mr. Reagan did.

And, if you are doing that, you are going to want somebody who you have a political relationship with. I don't think the Agency ought to be doing that, so I would welcome a professionalization of that position.

LEHRER: How do you feel about that, Mr. Carver?

CARVER: Well, I think the Agency ought to do all of the things that it's stipulated under the law, that it and the Director of Central Intelligence are responsible for doing, which includes the --

LEHRER: Including the things that Halperin doesn't want him to do.

CARVER: Including the things that Halperin doesn't like. I think that the period where we had four directors in three years was ridiculous, and I think that continuity, Admiral Turner was there for four years, Bill Casey has been there for six, and I think that continuity that spans changes in presidents is a very good and healthy thing.

I would love to see the directorship taken out of the rhythm of presidential transition as it used to be, instead of kept in it as it has now become.

LEHRER: How do you feel?

ADMIRAL TURNER: You don't want a set term. The Director of Central Intelligence is an immediate advisor to the President. The Director of the FBI is not. He works for the Attorney General.

The President must have personal confidence, otherwise the intelligence is going to fall on deaf ears if it comes from somebody the President doesn't know, doesn't understand, doesn't appreciate.

LEHRER: All right. Gentlemen, thank you all three very much.

NBC Nightly News

NBC Network

February 2, 1987 7:00 p.m.

Reactions to Casey Resignation

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TOM BROKAW: When 73 year old William Casey underwent surgery for a cancerous brain tumor six weeks ago, it seemed unlikely that he could return to his post as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Today, the White House announced that Casey will not be going back. He resigned and his Deputy, Robert Gates, was named to succeed him.

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As NBC's Chris Wallace reports tonight, Casey's resignation will not remove him from the Iran/contra controversy and it is unlikely to change the operation in the CIA, in the short haul, at least.

CHRIS WALLACE: White House officials said the President's ties to Casey were so deep that he would never have asked for a resignation. But sources say Chief of Staff Donald Regan wanted to resolved the situation and last Thursday went with Attorney General Meese to visit Casey in the hospital. Officials say Casey then volunteered to resign.

While the official word is that Casey is alert and recovering, sources say his speech is still so impaired, the President has not called him. But as a symbol of continued support, Mr. Reagan named Casey to be his counselor, health permitting.

Reaction to Casey's resignation reflected what a controversial figure he's become.

REP. LARRY SMITH: But I am, frankly, very happy that he has resigned. I think it was certainly in the national interest for him to have resigned.

RAY CLINE: The CIA is a better place under Bill Casey than it was during the Carter period.

WALLACE: There are two sides to the Casey record. He leaves the CIA with a bigger budget, larger staff and improved morale. But there has also been criticism. In 1984 there was a storm of protest over CIA involvement in the mining of Nicaraguan harbors. In 1985 the CIA was accused of mishandling Soviet defector Vitali Yevchenko, driving him back to the Soviets. And members of Congress have long said Casey failed to tell them about CIA operations.

There has been criticism again during the Iran arms scandal, that Casey's testimony before Congress was evasive and left many unanswered questions.

The 73 year old Casey is being replaced by 43 year old Robert Gates, a career intelligence official who's been number two at the CIA.

REP. DAVE McCURDY: He will help bridge the gap and there was a tremendous gap between Congress and Director Casey.

BOBBY INMAN: He's very strong on substance. And at a time when you're trying to sort out your possibilities in the last two years of an administration, there's no lost time.

WALLACE: The White House expects Gates to win easy confirmation, but there's been criticism that he had information early last October about the diversion of funds to the contras and never told Congress. Gates says his information wasn't solid, but some in Congress are upset.

SEN. PATRICK LEAHY: Yet he did not come to our committee and tell us even though he promised at his confirmation hearing that if he ever knew of such illegal or improper conduct that he would let us know.

WALLACE: Some officials admit privately they're relieved Casey has resigned, acknowledging he had become a political embarrassment. But the President, they say, feels only a sense of sadness that the loss of one of his closest advisors is now official.

Chris Wallace, NBC News at the White House.

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Nightline

ABC Network

February 2, 1987 11:30 p.m.

William Colby and Stansfield Turner

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TED KOPPEL: Good evening. I'm Ted Koppel and this is Nightline.

It was announced today that a seriously ill William Casey has resigned his post as CIA Director. Tonight, we'll look back at his career and at what lies ahead for the agency he headed, as we talk with two former CIA Chiefs, William Colby and Admiral Stansfield Turner.

It's been six weeks now since William Casey, Director of the Central Intelligence agency, entered Georgetown University Hospital here in Washington following a couple of minor seizures, only to find that he had a cancerous tumor on the brain. The tumor was removed and Mr. Casey is said to be recovering nicely. But it would clearly have been a long time before he could have resumed his duties at CIA. And so, today he resigned.

In one respect, as Nightline correspondent Marshall Frady reports, Casey, who is 73, marks the end of an era.

MARSHALL FRADY: William Casey, in just his first three years as CIA Director increased covert missions by some 500 percent. The last director to come out of the old trench coat melodrama of World War II spying, Casey brought something of that swashbuckling bravado to his efforts to resurrect the CIA from the scandals and disarray of the '70s.

But Casey himself could hardly have seemed less swashbuckling, the long, slumped, shambling and rumpled man who spoke in a dull mumble.

SEN. DANIEL MOYNIHAN: The President used to say that we now have a Director of the CIA who doesn't have to use a scrambler telephone because no one can understand him anyway.

FRADY: But the slouch, the shuffle, the mumble, it was like Casey's own personal cover. Behind it there operated a wily and tough old Irishman with a ferocious curiosity.

RICHARD ALLEN (Former National Security Advisor): We'd be someplace and suddenly he'd want to stop at a bookstore and he'd buy 20 books. We'd have them on the Concorde coming back and he'd go through half the books before we got to the New York stop in three and a half hours.

FRADY: That voraciously curious intelligence Casey also transferred to restyling the CIA.

SEN. DAVID DURENBERGER: That's, in large part, going to be Bill's contribution, that he has left behind or will leave behind a better, more professional intelligence-gather and predicting operation.

WILLIAM CASEY: One of the great paradoxes of this business is that successes have to go unheralded, you can't talk about them.

FRADY: But over the end of Bill Casey's watch at the CIA there now hangs an ironic and, for him, cruel

possibility, that all his labors to revitalize the CIA could wind up backfiring, diminishing the agency again.

The bluff determination that Casey brought to reactivating the CIA in twilight struggles in Central America, in Angola, in Afghanistan, that toughness began here in this modest neighborhood on Long Island where Casey grew up poor, the son of a widowed mother.

He was called "Cyclone" then and he soon scrapped his way to larger things. He made a lot of money as a buccaneering speculator in the rough house of venture capital. All this while moving in and out of the inner-sanctums of Republican politics.

Finally, in 1980, at the critical juncture of the New Hampshire Primary, he took over Reagan's faltering Presidential campaign and went on to win it for him.

ALLEN: I would say that when the President looked into Bill Casey's steely blue eyes, if indeed they are blue, he found that resonant quality of toughness and strength. He saw an identity of outlook on the world, particularly in confronting the Soviet challenge.

FRADY: Casey became closer to the President than perhaps any CIA Director in history, the first to sit as a fully participating Cabinet member where, beyond simply presenting intelligence and options, Casey took an active hand in actually constructing policy.
But Casey's ability to deploy the CIA was limited by a stricture set in the mid-70s. The multiplying scandals of Watergate climaxed for the CIA when Senator Frank Church's Select Committee on Intelligence unfolded a panorama of the agency's past follies.

A secret intelligence agency will always occupy an uneasy place in any democracy. And the shock of what emerged in the hearings here left the CIA staggered and produced legislation subjecting its most secret undertakings to Congressional oversight, so that Casey, seeking to return the CIA to its pre- Watergate vigors

faced something none of its predecessors before Watergate ever had to face.

Here in the heavily secured Senate Intelligence Committee hearing room and its counterpart in the House, Casey had to account for his actions. But even that seemingly minimal requirement Casey found irksome.

SEN. DURENBERGER: He would give you the impression that he'd rather not be there. "I'm here not because I want to but because I have to."

FRADY: Serious tensions arose over covert actions in the campaign against Nicaragua's Sandinistas. 1984, it's discovered the CIA has given contra forces what's described as an assassination manual. The CIA mined the harbors of Nicaragua without notifying Congress.

SEN. DURENBERGER: He felt, I believe, that it was his job to restore our capabilities to use some of those sort of borderline techniques because it was necessary to save the democracy in the evolving world sense.

FRADY: The result of all this, the Boland Amendment, only confounding the campaign against the Sandinistas by prohibiting CIA funding for the contras. Then, mixing improbably with Nicaragua, it was Iran, our ever complicating entanglement in the widening consequences of that revolution of rage, with its terrorist surrogates in Lebanon, that was to produce the climactic crisis of Casey's last days at the CIA.

Casey himself was deeply stricken when William Buckley, his counter-terrorism expert and Beirut Station Chief, was abducted.

SEN. MOYNIHAN: Buckley was picked up, held, tortured and tortured unto death. They could as well have been torturing Bill Casey. Bill Casey was loving that job until this moment came along and thereafter he was enduring it.

FRADY: Largely out of a similar anguish and desperation to free the other hostages, the

Administration, through its National Security Council, entered into a secret arms deal with Iran, and then at a time when contra funding was still prohibited.

So Casey's impatience with oversight in that small fraction of the CIA agenda, covert action, could wind up returning the agency to the mistrust and constriction he battled so hard to free it from.

This is Marshall Frady for Nightline in Washington.

KOPPEL: When we come back we'll talk with two former Directors of Central Intelligence, William Colby and Admiral Stansfield Turner.

(Commercials)

KOPPEL: With us live in our Washington Bureau, William Colby who was CIA Director from 1973 to 1975. And also here in Washington, Admiral Stansfield Turner who headed the same agency from 1977 until 1981.

Mr. Colby, when you have a man like Mr. Casey who clearly had, at best, an adversarial relationship with Congress, can that kind of a relationship ever produce a really well functioning CIA?

WILLIAM COLBY: Well, I think you're always going to have a certain amount of tension between the CIA and the Congress. The Congress' job is to supervise the CIA, independently of the President's supervision of it. Sometimes the President is going to want to do things and sometimes the Congress is going to have doubts about it, as we saw in the Boland Amendment, for example, over in Nicaragua.

On the other hand, in areas where there's essential consensus, then I think the relationship gets along very well. Apparently, that is exactly the case with respect to Afghanistan.

KOPPEL: Now, Admiral Turner, you tried very hard to change what had been possibly an even more adversarial relationship that existed before you came in. You

tried to open things up a little bit. It's almost an oxymoron to open up the CIA, I suppose, but you tried to have a relationship with Congress, a relationship with the media. And yet you have probably been more criticized as a Director of Central Intelligence than any man before or since, at least by the professionals in the agency.

ADMIRAL STANSFIELD TURNER: No, by the professionals out of the agency, the retired people. It's never easy to change a bureaucracy and make it go in a new and different direction, but the Church Committee investigations, which were shown in your preview film clips, Ted, were a changing point for the CIA.

The CIA had, up until that time, not had any real supervision, any accountability from the Congress. What had happened was without accountability they had made some mistakes. Not many, but enough that these investigations took place. The criticism of those led to a hunkering down, a desire not to take risks and get into more trouble. We had ground American human intelligence almost to a halt by 1975, '76.

We can't let that happen again. You've got to have accountability. That's why Mr. Ford and now Vice President Bush set up a process of White House and Congressional accountability. That's what we were working on during the Carter years to smooth that process out.

KOPPEL: Mr. Colby, tell me, if you can, what changes Director Casey wrought. In what respects is the agency a different place today than it was when he took over six years ago?

COLBY: Well, I think the first change he did was to revive the spirit of aggression by the agency to go out and do the job. This really reflected the Reagan Administration's approach.

During the '70s, there was an inclination to think that the CIA had better take a very low level of activity, not engage in high risk operations. And the Reagan

Administration, led by Director Casey, took a very positivist approach toward CIA's jobs.

The second, and probably the most lasting contribution that Casey made, was to reorganize the analytical side of the agency so that it was really much more fitted to do the kind of job that CIA's analysis should be doing, organizing it geographically instead of by the various disciplines of economics and politics and so forth the way universities are organized.

KOPPEL: Now, there's one factor that neither one of you has mentioned.

Stansfield Turner, let me raise it with you. Money. He, I believe, more than doubled the CIA's budget, at least for clandestine operations. He got a lot more money for the agency. How important is that?

ADMIRAL TURNER: It's important if you're going to expand the covert activities like Nicaragua as substantially as he did. I believe that when I left the agency it was well funded in almost all areas. In fact, in some areas overfunded. That led to some sloppy procedures, some lack of good leadership when they had too many people doing the things that needed to be done.

KOPPEL: How important do you think money is, Mr. Colby, and increasing the budget?

COLBY: Well, money by itself is a reflection of the priority that the Administration puts on the efforts of the agency, and both the Administration and Congress by voting that kind of money. And if there's more money, that means that they want them to do more.

KOPPEL: All right. What I want to do is take a break and when we come back talk about Mr. Gates, the man who will be the new Director of Central Intelligence, if indeed he is approved by Congress. We'll continue our discussion in a moment.

(Commercials)

KOPPEL: Continuing our conversation now with William Colby and Admiral Stansfield Turner.

Mr. Colby, when you and Bill Casey were operatives for OSS during the Second World War, Robert Gates, the man who is now the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, I guess was just about born, maybe wasn't even born.

COLBY: I think so.

KOPPEL: What does that mean generationally? Do you expect any major change simply because we have a new generation taking over now? He's 43 years old. That's very young.

COLBY: No, I don't think the generation change makes the difference because the agency has developed a discipline and a career service approach to its chore as a permanent part of the American government.

The major change is that he represents the final arrival of the analytical side of the agency to its full position as the central element of Central Intelligence. Up to now, it's been the operators who have dominated, such as myself.

KOPPEL: Now, explain what the difference is between the analytical and the operational side.

COLBY: Well, the operational side are the ones who live abroad, go out and meet the foreigners, do the operations abroad. The analytical ones are the ones who stay here, study all the material, come up with the judgments as to what these all mean to out country. And for a long time, that was badly organized so that it didn't play a primary role. I think Casey has reorganized it so that these kinds of experts can devote their talents directly to the problems that our government faces.

KOPPEL: There is another, perhaps even more fundamental difference between Directors of Central

Intelligence, Admiral Turner, and that is some of them come up through the ranks and others are imposed, as for example you were or as for example George Bush was. In other words, we've got people who have not been in the intelligence community all their lives and who are placed in charge of it. Which is better?

ADMIRAL TURNER: There's a time for each. I think there are times when any bureaucracy needs to be changed. The circumstances in which it operates have been changing around it. I think that's the time to bring in somebody from the outside.

Once in a while, in an agency like the CIA, it's very important to have a professional come up through the ranks, as did Bill Colby and now Bob Gates. That gives heart to the others that they too have a chance to be at the very top of their profession.

So, I don't think there's a formula for one or the other. In the final analysis, it's really got to come down to the President of the United States and whom he has confidence in and with whom he can work.

KOPPEL: Well now, you raise an interesting point. Obviously, here's a man now who's going to be Director of Central Intelligence probably for one two years because when a new president comes along, the new president is probably going to want a new DCI. Why do you think President Reagan nominated this man for this job at this time?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think it may have been difficult to get somebody else and I think that Mr. Reagan will be more comfortable in having Bob Gates, who was part of the whole contra/Irangate problem that is going to be before the Congress and before the special prosecutor over the next few months, the one who's going to testify on that before those bodies. It's going to make it a lot easier to get the CIA story out in a good manner.

KOPPEL: Why, you mean because it's his problem and if

some new guy comes in he's going to want to open too many closets?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, there's that aspect, but there's also the aspect that Gates does know what happened. He doesn't have to spend time going in and exploring. He's been there, he's certainly been looking into anything he didn't know personally.

KOPPEL: What do you see as the direction of the agency now, Mr. Colby? I would assume since this, after all, is Mr. Casey's deputy that the direction would be essentially the same as it has been over the past six years.

COLBY: I feel it will be largely the same. I think the agency's going to follow policy set by the President and by the Administration, particularly on covert action. But it's also going to have a major role in collecting intelligence about the tough problems around the world, the Middle East, the Soviet Union, Central America and so forth, and interpreting those for our government. It's going to continue to improve our technological capabilities and conduct those covert operations that the government decides are important to conduct and the Congress lets the agency go ahead and do.

KOPPEL: Give me a sense, because both of you have sat in that chair. How important is it to have immediate and direct access to the President of the United States, to have, as Bill Casey obviously did, a very close personal relationship with the President?

COLBY: I think it's a great advantage. In general, I think that we should run the agency in more or less the same way that you run the Navy or the Army or anything else, with somebody personally acceptable and known to the President at the top and professionals underneath him making sure that the machinery runs properly. From time to time, it's appropriate to put a professional in the top as we have as Secretary of Defense and other jobs.

KOPPEL: Admiral Turner?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I would disagree with Bill just a little bit. I think there is a generational change here. Bob Gates comes from a younger group who don't have some of the entrenched views that the old timers did, who's more adaptable to change. I made Bob Gates my immediate executive assistant during my last year as Director because he was an innovative, imaginative person whom I thought was more willing than most to look at new ways of doing things in the CIA. So I think when he's on his own, he may well represent a new generational approach, a willingness to adapt to the time more than perhaps some of the older people.

KOPPEL: All right. Admiral Turner, Mr. Colby, I thank you both very much indeed for being with us this evening.